



U.S. Department of Justice

Ronald C. Machen Jr.
*United States Attorney for the
District of Columbia*

*Judiciary Center
555 Fourth St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530*

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, July 28, 2011

For Information Contact:

Public Affairs

(202) 252-6933

<http://www.justice.gov/usao/dc/news/2011/apr/news.html>

Former Background Investigator For Federal Government Sentenced For Making a False Statement - Judge Orders Four Months of Incarceration and 150 Days of Home Detention -

WASHINGTON - Catherine G. Webb, a former Special Agent of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), was sentenced today to four months of incarceration on a charge stemming from her falsification of work on background investigations of federal employees and contractors, announced U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. and Patrick E. McFarland, Inspector General for the Office of Personnel Management.

Webb, 48, of Fisher, Illinois, pled guilty in April 2011, in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, to one count of making a false statement. She was sentenced by the Honorable Richard W. Roberts, who also ordered her to perform 50 hours of community service. Following her incarceration, Webb will be placed on 30 months of supervised release; under the judge's order, the first 150 days of that period are to be spent in home detention.

Webb worked for OPM's Federal Investigative Services. As part of her guilty plea, she admitted that she falsified work on background investigations of federal employees and contractors. Between March 2009 and March 2010, in more than a dozen Reports of Investigations on background investigations, Webb represented that she had interviewed a source or reviewed a record regarding the subject of the background investigation when, in fact, she had not conducted the interview or obtained the record.

All of these reports were utilized and relied upon by the agencies requesting the background investigations to determine whether the subjects were suitable for positions having access to classified information, for positions impacting national security, or for receiving or retaining security clearances.

Webb's false representations have required OPM's Federal Investigative Services to reopen and rework numerous background investigations that were assigned to her during the time period of her falsifications, at an estimated cost of \$73,293 to the U.S. government.

Under terms of her guilty plea, Webb agreed to pay that amount in restitution to Federal Investigative Services.

This is one of several cases prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia in the last three years involving false representations by background investigators and record checkers working on federal background investigations. Eight background investigators and two record checkers previously were convicted of charges.

Federal Investigative Services, formerly known as the Center for Federal Investigative Services or the Federal Investigative Services Division, through its workforce of approximately 7,300 investigators, is responsible for conducting background investigations for numerous federal agencies and their contractors, on individuals either employed by or seeking employment with those agencies or contractors. Federal Investigative Services processed approximately 2 million investigations in the 2010 fiscal year.

In conducting background investigations, the investigators conduct interviews of individuals who have information about the person who is the subject of the review. In addition, the investigators seek out, obtain, and review documentary evidence, such as employment records, to verify and corroborate information provided by either the subject of the background investigation or by persons interviewed during the investigation. After conducting interviews and obtaining documentary evidence, the investigators prepare a Report of Investigation containing the results of the interviews and document reviews, and electronically submit the material to OPM in Washington, D.C. OPM then provides a copy of the investigative file to the requesting agency, which can use the information to determine an individual's eligibility for employment or a security clearance.

In announcing the sentence, U.S. Attorney Machen and Inspector General McFarland praised the work of Special Agent Nathaniel Smith, OPM, Office of the Inspector General, and Philip Kroop, Chief of Quality and Integrity Assurance, OPM-Federal Investigative Services. They also acknowledged the efforts of Assistant U.S. Attorney Ellen Chubin Epstein and former Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas E. Zeno, who investigated and prosecuted this matter.